



## **Early Steps Procedures Clarification No. 1 Assistive Technology Devices and Services**

Effective Date: July 1, 2003

**Purpose:**

- To clarify appropriate steps to follow for the acquisition of assistive technology devices
- To clarify what are appropriate assistive technology devices under Part C

**Definition of Assistive Technology (34 CFR 300.12):**

Assistive technology device means any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of children with disabilities.

The device must be useful to the child at the present time.

Assistive technology service means a service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device.

**Assistive technology services include:**

- a) the evaluation of the needs of a child with a disability, including a functional evaluation of the child in the child's customary environment;
- b) purchasing, leasing, or otherwise providing for the acquisition of assistive technology devices by children with disabilities;
- c) selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing, or replacing assistive technology devices;
- d) coordinating and using other therapies, interventions, or services with assistive technology devices, such as those associated with existing education and rehabilitation plans and programs;
- e) training or technical assistance for a child with disabilities or if appropriate, that child's family; and,
- f) training or technical assistance for professionals, including individuals providing early intervention services, or other individuals who provide services to, or are otherwise substantially involved in the major life functions of individuals with disabilities.

Assistive technology devices, provided through Early Steps (Part C), must be used by the individual child for at least ninety (90) days prior to transitioning out of Early Steps. Central office must approve any device prior to purchase if the child is transitioning out of Early Steps in less than ninety (90) days.

Part C is not responsible for providing assistive technology devices that are to be used once the child turns three or is enrolled in early childhood special education.

Any assistive device must be age appropriate for the child's immediate use.

**Eligible Providers of Assistive Devices and/or Services:**

Audiologist

Speech Pathologist

Physical Therapist  
Optometrist  
Certified Durable Medical Equipment Provider

Physician  
Occupational Therapist  
Certified orthotist/prosthetist

RATE: Medicaid covered assistive technology devices will be purchased according to Medicaid approved rates; the Early Steps Central Office located in OPH must approve devices not covered by Medicaid for purchase. Medicaid reimbursement rates are used for D.M.E. or assistive technology devices purchased by Early Steps. Items not covered by Medicaid will be paid based upon the rates of reimbursement that DHH/OPH/ Part C establishes for those specific items.

Assistive Technology services are billed by the provider and reimbursed according to the maximum rate that DHH has established for the provider specialty (type) rendering the service.

NOTE: When \$1,000 or more per item of Part C federal or state funds are used toward the purchase of equipment and/or assistive technology devices, the equipment and/or devices are considered to be public property. Parents must be informed of this.

Examples of Assistive Technology that Early Steps will purchase(not an exhaustive list)

- A. Devices for self-help--
  - Adapted feeding utensils—maroon spoons, adapted bowls, plates and cups
  - Prosthesis for limbs
- B. Devices for seating and positioning—
  - feeder seats, floor sitters, corner chairs, Rifton chairs and insertions, attachments and adaptations to correctly position or support an infant or toddler in a seated position, side layers and standers with accompanying supports and trays;
  - bath chairs (for infants over 8 months)
  - boppy pillows (for infants over 6 months)
- C. Devices for mobility—for the child to move within his/her environment or to be transported to a Part C service
  - Walkers, adapted walkers
  - Scooterboards
  - Adapted crawlers
  - Adapted /therapeutic strollers and car seats
  - Leg braces, splints, AFO's, orthotics
  - Wheelchairs
  - Weighted vests

Note: Car seats, adapted or not, that are needed for transporting a child to routine activities such as grocery shopping, attending church, etc. or to medical follow-up appointments are not provided by Part C.

- D. Devices for age-appropriate communication skills—
  - Communication boards
  - Augmentative and alternate communication aids (designed to be age appropriate) such as Big Mac, Cheap Talk, One-Step Communicator, Hip-Talk, Tech/TALK
  - PCS Cards for use with Picture Exchange Communication System (PECs)
- E. Devices for play and cognitive skill development—
  - Adapted toys
  - Switches, environmental control units and battery interrupters
- F. Devices for vision or hearing (child must have a diagnosed visual and/or hearing impairment)
  - Ocular aids and magnifiers
  - Eyeglassess
  - Assistive listening devices—hearing aids, auditory trainers, or other forms of amplification

Examples of devices that are not purchased by Early Steps (not an exhaustive list)

1. Medical equipment

Apnea monitors	Syringes
Catheters	Heart monitors
Electrical stimulation devices	Respirators
Feeding pumps	Nebulizers
Ventilators	Helmets

2. Toys that are not adapted or designed to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of children with disabilities

dolls	puzzles	building blocks
balls	mouthng toys echo mikes	shape sorters
riding toys	stuffed animals	mobiles

3. Generic items typically needed and used by all children

car seats	high chairs
youth beds	play tables
bath seats (for infants under 8 months)	boppy pillows (for infants under 6 months)
infant swings	potty chairs
pacifiers	toothbrushes
teethers	straws
massagers	music tapes/CDs
swimming pools and pool toys	strollers

4. Standard equipment used by service providers in the provision of early intervention services (regardless of service location/setting)

tables	desks	therapy kits
chairs	therapy benches	mats
therapy balls	vestibular swings	gait ladders
horn kits	massagers	brushes
trampolines		
specialized equipment used by the therapist that the child can not operate independently		

5. Miscellaneous items

computers and computer software  
prescription nutritional supplements  
specialized foods  
batteries, hearing aid or other

## Steps to Acquire Appropriate Assistive Technology Devices

### 1. Complete Section 8, page 6a of the IFSP.

IFSP Outcome Number—The AT device must be associated with at least one IFSP outcome

Name of device—List the name of the specific device to be provided

Professional who will help family with device (Provider)—List the provider who is responsible for recommending the device and who will work with the family to appropriately use the device

Where is the device located?—List the specific location that the device is stored and used (home, child care, etc.)

When is the device to be used?—Identify the daily routine that device will be used to support

How is the device to be provided?—Indicate if this is purchase, rent, loan, or if it is a repair

Start Date—Indicate date that the device goes into use by the child

End Date—Project the date that the device will no longer be used by the child. Do not extend the end date past the annual date of the IFSP.

HCPCS Code—Indicate the HCPCS code for the device. This is found on the provider matrix website: [www.eikids.com/la/matrix/default.asp](http://www.eikids.com/la/matrix/default.asp) The HCPCS codes are under the Help tab.

Price—Indicate the price of the device.

2. If the child is enrolled in Medicaid and the Medicaid Durable Medical Equipment (DME) program covers the assistive device, then the provider must bill Medicaid for the device using their Medicaid provider number. This is the only circumstance where the provider does not bill the CFO.

3. All other situations—where the assistive device is not covered through the Medicaid DME program and/or the child is not eligible for Medicaid, the assistive device is billed through the CFO.

4. If the AT provider has not enrolled with the CFO, contact the proposed provider and direct them to the Provider Enrollment webpage for enrollment. All assistive technology providers must be enrolled with the CFO in order to be reimbursed.

5. The SPOE will enter information from Section 8 into the CFO software. Authorizations for the AT device are issued through the CFO.

(a) Items costing less than \$1000, enter the letter A

(b) Items costing more than \$1000, the SPOE or FSC must send a copy of the IFSP and Request for Authorization Form to the Central Office. The Central Office will provide the authorization to the SPOE/FSC with an authorization number to use for billing the device.

### Disposition of AT Devices and Equipment

Equipment, materials, and supplies purchased with Part C funds are restricted in use to infants and toddlers with disabilities eligible for Part C services. These specific purchases are addressed in the Education Department General Accounting Rules or EDGAR (34 CFR, Parts 80.32, 80.33)

### Equipment

"Equipment", as defined in the federal regulations, means items that are electrical or mechanical in nature or function and have a useful life of at least a year and cost more than \$1,000 per unit. This definition includes the following items: equipment/assistive technology devices, kits, sets, etc. costing \$1,000 or more per unit and which have a useful life of more than one year.

**NOTE: When \$1,000 or more of Part C federal or state funds are used toward the purchase of equipment and/or assistive technology devices, the equipment and/or devices are considered to be public property. During the IFSP team meeting, parents must be informed that only assistive technology costing \$1000 or more is property of the Part C according to federal regulation. The assistive technology device must be inventoried and tracked so that it can be returned to Part C when the child exits the Part C system.**

### Requirements of the Inventory Control System

The following federal requirements must be followed in the establishment and maintenance of an inventory control system for equipment and/or assistive technology devices costing more than \$1,000.

- A. Property records shall be maintained accurately. For each item of equipment, the records shall include:
  - 1) a description of the equipment, including manufacturer's model number, if any;
  - 2) an identification number, such as the manufacturer's serial number;
  - 3) acquisition date and unit acquisition cost;
  - 4) location, use, and condition of the equipment and the date the information was reported; and,
  - 5) all pertinent information on the ultimate transfer, replacement, or disposition of the equipment.
- B. A physical inventory of equipment shall be taken and the results reconciled with the property records at least once every two (2) years to verify the existence, current utilization, and continued need for the equipment and/or assistive technology device. Any differences between quantities determined by the physical inspection and those shown in the accounting records shall be investigated to determine the causes of the differences.
- C. A control system shall be in effect to ensure adequate safeguards to prevent loss, damage, or theft of the equipment. Any loss, damage, or theft of equipment shall be investigated and fully documented.
- D. Adequate maintenance procedures shall be implemented to keep the equipment in good condition.
- E. Where equipment is to be sold and the federal government is to have a right to part or all of the proceeds, selling procedures shall be established which will provide for competition to the extent practicable and result in the highest possible return.

### Disposition of Equipment

If the equipment and/or assistive technology device is not needed by Part C and can continue to be used by the child, the device may be loaned (temporary basis; device remains on the Part C inventory) or transferred (permanent basis; device is removed from the Part C inventory) to the school district in which the child is enrolling for early childhood special education (ECSE/Part B services). If the child is not eligible for ECSE/Part B or is not transitioning to the public school for other reasons, the device may be transferred to another child in the Part C system or to an assistive technology bank for future use. Only when a device no longer has any use for the program or has no fair market value, the device may be disposed by a state agency, following state procedures for disposition of state property.

### Part C Assistive Technology Inventory List (for use by SPOEs and FSCs)

Complete table below each time an assistive device costing \$1,000 or more is provided through the IFSP.

This record must be kept up-to-date and maintained for 5 years.

Child's Name, Date of Birth	Description of Equipment	Model or Serial Number	Acquistion Date	Cost at Purchase	Location of Device (address) & disposition
					<input type="checkbox"/> Loan <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer
					<input type="checkbox"/> Loan <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer
					<input type="checkbox"/> Loan <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer
					<input type="checkbox"/> Loan <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer
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